

# Daily Pilot & Times OC

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## The Vietnam War, 50 years later



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

A DETAILED SCENE of a fighter jet pilot on display at the "Echoes of Conflict: Remembering Vietnam," at the Heroes Hall Museum.

See **War**, page A8

A new exhibit at Heroes Hall in Costa Mesa examines the period through artifacts, immersive experiences and the voices of those who survived it.

BY SARA CARDINE

**P**aul Todd had just turned 23 and was enjoying his first year of teaching U.S. history to middle-schoolers at McPherson Junior High in the city of Orange when he received notice he was being drafted to serve in Vietnam.

It wasn't welcome news at the time. Like many who'd attended college in the 1960s, Todd's political views trended in an anti-war direction and conflicted with those of his father, who'd served in the Navy for 20 years. But duty called.

"The day school ended, I was on the bus to go to Fort Ord," the 77-year-old Orange resident recalled in an interview Thursday.

After six months of training as a flight operations specialist at Georgia's then-called Fort Benning, Todd went to Vietnam in 1971, where he served his one-year duty directing helicopter transport activity.

It was in that role he began to view the conflict from a different perspective.

"You may be anti-war when you're a civilian, but once you're a part of the military, you do what you have to do and support what's going on and that's it," he said, describing long periods of boredom spent with fellow servicemen, punctuated by sporadic moments of urgency and action.



## Now open in Irvine

### UCI Health

Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center

## Law change for manicurists prompts debate, confusion

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

Since the beginning of the year, licensed manicurists and nail salon owners in Orange County and across the state have been confused about whether a change in state law allows the business practice of renting a booth to continue or not.

After an exemption expired under state law, nail salon workers are now subject to a rigorous test to determine if they are independent contractors while licensed aestheticians, electrologists, barbers and cosmetologists remain exempted from it.

Assemblyman Tri Ta, a Republican whose 70th Assembly District encompasses cities including Garden Grove, Westminster and Fountain Valley, is leading an effort to bring the exemption back and extend it indefinitely to clear up the confusion.

"In the past few months, my office has received a lot of calls and emails from nail salon own-



Allen J. Schaben | Los Angeles Times

A STUDIO 19 NAIL technician attends to a customer's hands after finishing her pedicure at Nail Bar in Tustin.

ers and professionals," Ta said. "They are stressed out because the exclusion has created financial and operational difficulties. That is a burden and financial

hardship for salon owners and manicurists. We have to do something for them."

See **Law**, page A2

## O.C. Asian American organizations partner to boost cancer screenings

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

With cancer being the leading cause of death for Asian Americans in Orange County, five key community organizations have banded together to sound a singular message: Get screened.

The newly formed Orange County Asian American Cancer Partnership held a kick-off celebration at the offices of Southland Integrated Services in Garden Grove.

"We expect not only to bridge cancer gaps for the 35,000 folks we already serve, but to expand cancer care access to upwards of 10,000 medical patients across



**DR. REGINA CHINSIO-KWONG** shares her own experiences as a cancer survivor in encouraging screenings.

Courtesy OCAPICA

diverse linguistic, cultural and geographic communities," said Ellen Ahn, chief executive of Korean Community Services.

The coalition brings together

Korean Community Services, Orange County Asian Pacific Islander Community Alliance,

See **Screenings**, page A4



James Carbone

FAMILIES FORWARD'S 670-square-foot Community Market provides a shopping experience for families who need food assistance.

## New market offers dignity to families in need as they shop

BY MATT SZABO

Nonprofit Families Forward used to offer "a bag and a handshake" through its food pantry assistance program, as its chief executive, Madelynn Hirneise, put it.

That offer is turning into a dignified place to shop and a grocery list.

Families Forward officially launched the Community Market on Wednesday with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at its Irvine headquarters.

"We have imagined this space as kind of like a Trader Joe's," Hirneise said. "You get in there, there's warm welcomes, warm hellos, and before you know it you've told the Trader Joe's employee your entire weekend plans. You're just building that relationship, and we're starting to gather what's happening at home."

Families Forward has been operating a food pantry since 1987. But Hirneise said the Community Market fits into a new, narrative-

shifting objective: Rather than counting how many families are coming to the market, it's about counting how many families no longer need food assistance.

It was time to do something differently, she said, as Families Forward serves an average of about 800 families per month. The number of families seeking services has held steady rather than dropped since the coronavirus pandemic.

"We kind of talked about the pandemic being unprecedented, but now it's our new normal," Hirneise said. "How do we get more upstream? How do we prevent these families from getting into this situation in the first place, because it's not sustainable for us to continue to meet the need of the families that are coming in?"

The pantry's expansion into the Community Market features a new 670-square-foot market, plus

See **Market**, page A2

# Briceño joins race for 67th Assembly District

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

Ada Briceño recalled a time when hotel workers had few political allies in Orange County they could count on.

Long before “blue waves,” union drives and contract fights at resort-area hotels in Anaheim and Garden Grove in the early 2000s had next to no support outside of former state Sen. Joe Dunn and former Anaheim City Councilman Richard Chavez.

“I counted with my hands the people that would listen to workers,” Briceño said. “It was an impossible situation.”

Having launched a campaign for the 67th Assembly District, the co-president of Unite Here Local 11, a hotel workers union, is now looking to be that representative who will directly advocate for working class residents, as current Assemblywoman Sharon Quirk-Silva terms out in 2026.

“I’m running because we need people like me to be in the Legislature,” said Briceño, a Cypress resident. “I’ve washed dishes at the Anaheim Convention Center. I bussed tables at a small restaurant in San Pedro. The only way to bring back the working class is if you legislate on their behalf. Who better to do that than a former worker and organizer like myself?”

The county’s political landscape has changed drastically since Unite Here Local 11’s early labor cam-



James Carbone

**ADA BRICEÑO** is the latest labor leader to vie for public office as she has launched a campaign for state Assembly.

paings, with Democrats now claiming all but one congressional seat and registered Democrats outnumbering Republicans by roughly 40,000 voters.

For the past six years, Briceño has guided the transformation along as the chair of the Democratic Party of Orange County, a post she stepped down from last month.

But even with more labor-friendly elected officials across O.C., Briceño’s focus on the 2026 election is motivated, in part, by the belief that the Democratic Party lost segments of working class voters nationwide last November.

She’s seeking to win them back with the 67th District including working class swaths of Anaheim, Fullerton, Buena Park and Hawaiian Gardens.

In announcing her campaign, Briceño hopes to join a list of former Unite Here leaders and organ-

izers who have gone on to win elected office, from state Sen. Maria Elena Durazo to Los Angeles City Councilman Hugo Soto-Martinez.

It marks another key moment of integration between the labor movement and the local Democratic Party.

Tobias Higbie, a professor of history and labor studies at UCLA, noted that labor unions have a long tradition of running members and leaders for elected office as part of taking a broader view of social change.

“Unions are also venues where new leaders emerge from the community and test their vision and skills,” he said. “In this sense, it’s natural that someone like Briceño, who has successfully led an important and large organization like Unite Here Local 11 should

See *Race*, page A4

# Laguna forges forward with fleet electrification

BY ANDREW TURNER

Looking to put a charge into its plans for the electrification of the municipal fleet, Laguna Beach could soon begin investing in the infrastructure needed to power those vehicles.

The City Council directed staff to proceed with issuing a request for proposals for the installation of charging stations on Tuesday night. The action came following an update from ICF, the city’s consultant on the transition’s implementation plan.

A presentation focused heavily on the next five years, with plans calling for the installation of 47 charging stations at two primary sites. There would be 31 stations to support 68 vehicles at the city’s corporation yard on Laguna Canyon Road and 16 stations for 54 vehicles at City Hall. The estimated cost for the charging infrastructure is \$2.87 million.

As of June, the city had 185 vehicles in its municipal fleet. The near-term project would help service the planned transition of up to 130 of its vehicles by 2030, city staff said. Converting those vehicles from internal combustion engines would come at a cost of \$12.87 million.

The city would be looking at spending \$18.78 million over the next five years to facilitate the short-term fleet transition plan.

“When comparing the cost of an electric fleet to the equivalent cost of an internal combustion fleet,



File Photo

**A CANYON ROUTE** trolley drives by the Sawdust Art Festival in Laguna Beach.

that net investment to the city would be about \$2.4 million of additional spending,” Emma Sullivan, a project manager for ICF, said when factoring in fleet incentive programs.

Sullivan estimated that about \$4 million could be offset through incentives. Approximately \$1 million is tied to potential federal funding, she said.

“There are many incentive and grant programs at the state and local level, which is great news because federal programs aren’t predictable right now,” Sullivan added. “The take-away with federal programs right now is that the sooner funding is applied for, the better.”

Laguna Beach is actively pursuing incentives through Southern California Edison’s Charge Ready Transport Program.

City staff could return to the council for its consideration of a contract for charging station installation and an agreement with SCE as soon as April or May.

Infrastructure upgrades would also be required for electrical panels, transformers, conduits, cables and meters. Those additions would come at an estimated cost of \$335,000, but Sullivan said about \$268,000 could be reimbursed through the Charge Ready Transport Program.

Trolleys made up a substantial portion of the projected cost, accounting for nearly half of the vehicle replacement cost. The city has 25 propane-powered trolleys in its public transit program. A plan to replace 19 of them over the next

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## UCI Health Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center & Ambulatory Care

**UCI Health**  
Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center



## MARKET

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a third refrigerated walk-in space that allows for expanded storage of staples like milk, eggs and produce.

Each family receives a sheet while shopping, based off their family size and the pantry’s inventory. Families Forward is in the process of digitizing that process, so the inventory would update in real time and be available on a customer’s phone.

“If we have a surplus of cauliflower, we want to make sure families know, you can grab more cauliflower,” Hirneise said. “If we have limited meat items, then we can reduce that. It’s



James Carbone

**FAMILIES FORWARD** Board President Victor Cao explains the concept of the Community Market in Irvine.

an ebb and flow, based off the inventory and the family size.”

The Community Market was funded in part by the San Diego Gas & Electric

Company Community Assistance Fund. Orange County Supervisor Don Wagner and Harvesters, a group of women dedicated to raising funds and awareness for Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County, were also able to secure grant funding.

Hirneise said those grants totaled about \$200,000, but in-kind donations from general contractor C.W. Driver and others pushed the total to more than \$300,000. They include three large wall murals donated by artist Phoebe Nelson, owner of Pandr Design Co.

Wagner was one of several speakers at the ceremony.

“What makes our com-

munity wonderful is not the stuff that comes out of City Hall or the Hall of Administration,” he said. “Heaven knows, it’s not Sacramento or government. It’s people doing for people on the ground, and that is exemplified by Families Forward.”

Irvine Mayor Larry Agran also gave remarks.

“We have to celebrate all of the work that is being done, and not kind of carry this burden forward year after year,” Agran said. “We have to frankly acknowledge, something is wrong in America when so few have so much, and so many have so little. It just has to be confronted, head on, as a part of our mission. The work you do I think implic-

ity tackles that problem ... [We want to] be the biggest, most populous county in the United States of America that is food secure, nutrition secure and where there’s ample housing for everyone.”

Irvine resident Dalal, who requested her last name not be used for security reasons, also spoke at the ribbon-cutting ceremony. She has received both housing and food assistance through Families Forward.

She said she used to have a well-paying corporate job before she got married and moved to San Diego, where she focused on caring for her family. After a divorce, she was left with custody of

See *Market*, page A4

## LAW

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What Ta proposes is simple: reinsert the independent contractor exemption for licensed manicurists through Assembly Bill 504, which he co-authored with fellow Republican Assembly member Alexandra Macedo.

Lucero Herrera, a co-author of a UCLA Labor Center report on nail salon workers published last year, expressed concerns that the bill would represent a step back for manicurists.

“While some manicurists operate as legitimate independent contractors — bringing their own supplies, setting their own hours and managing their own clients — many should be classified as employees and receive essential labor protections,” she said. “Extending the exemption under AB 504 could further erode worker protections and perpetuate precarity in the nail salon industry.”

Ta introduced his bill on Feb. 10 and said it aims to

correct “racial targeting” in state employment law, as he pointed to the UCLA report’s finding that 82% of manicurists were born in Vietnam and 85% are women.

“If the exemption already works for other types of beauty licenses, it should work for manicurists,” he said. “We know that the industry is made up of minority business owners and workers. They are pursuing their own version of the American dream.”

Mike Vo, a Huntington Beach-based business attorney and co-founder of the Pro Nails Assn., deemed a joint bulletin by the state Department of Consumer Affairs and Board of Barbering and Cosmetology alerting manicurists that the rules would “slightly differ” in 2025 to be an understatement.

“It’s a dramatic change,” he said. “I think that misled some folks.”

In recent months, Vo has educated the nail salon industry, from owners to manicurists, about his interpretation of the rule

changes.

“It’s really disrupting the business model that folks have invested thousands of dollars into,” Vo said. “The investments that are required to perform nail services as a licensed manicurist would require substantial investments in either retrofitting a home or having a mobile trailer. For some people, that’s not practical.”

Vo has advised manicurists who are also licensed cosmetologists that they can also legally do nails at a salon as an independent contractor, but that would entail budgeting a return to beauty school for those who don’t already hold a cosmetology license.

The change in state law particularly impacts Southern California, where half of all of the state’s nail salon workers are located, according to the UCLA report.

Orange County, as home to the largest Vietnamese population outside of Vietnam, has long seen such refugees work as manicurists after the fall of Saigon nearly 50 years ago.

“For several decades, Vietnamese nail professionals have been really successful,” Ta said. “The nail industry is one of the most important career opportunities for the Vietnamese American community, not only in Orange County, not only in California, but across the nation.”

With a more critical view of the industry, former Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez originally set a 2022 sunset provision for manicurists in AB 5, a bill that was signed into law in 2019.

“Nail salons have had a long history of high rates of misclassification and utilization of an immigrant workforce that often is unaware of their employment rights — an issue I worked on as a legislator long before AB 5,” said Gonzalez, a Democrat who is now president of the California Federation of Labor Unions. “Additional guardrails were needed in the law to ensure the misclassified workers in this industry were protected, while still allowing individual business owners the ability to work as a sole

proprietor and simply rent space from a salon.”

In 2021, Gov. Gavin Newsom signed an extension that expired this year.

The California Federation of Labor Unions is working with legislators to clarify its position that booth renting can continue after the law change.

Vo doesn’t see any viable way for a licensed manicurist to be considered an independent contractor under what’s known as the ABC test, which demands proof that their work is not overseen by a business owner and is provided outside of the normal course of a hiring business owner.

“I have yet to talk to anyone who is still legally characterized as an independent contractor after the ABC test,” Vo said.

Being classified as an employee entitles nail salon workers to earn at least the state’s minimum wage in addition to other rights and benefits like sick pay, rest and meal breaks, overtime pay and workers’ compensation.

According to the UCLA report, a third of nail salon

workers were classified as self-employed before the rule change and 80% of nail salon workers, overall, were considered low-wage earners earning less than \$17.08 an hour.

“Misclassification often results in lower wages, unstable income and lack of rights,” Herrera said. “Unemployment insurance, health and safety protections and safeguards against retaliation and discrimination are all benefits that proved critical for manicurists during the pandemic.”

Ta’s bill is awaiting a referral to a policy committee. He sees it as a necessary step to correct what he believes is an unfair singling out of mostly Vietnamese women manicurists.

“We just want to correct an unfair treatment in California employment law,” Ta said. “Everyone needs to have the same treatment. It is a must for nail salon professionals.”

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# UCI Health

Chao Family Comprehensive  
Cancer Center

## Cancer innovation guides us; caring for you drives us.

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Dr. Farshid Dayyani is a nationally recognized medical oncologist who specializes in the advanced treatment of gastrointestinal and hepatobiliary cancers.



# Youth team up to spread Valentine’s Day joy

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA



**FIFTH-GRADER** Melanie Martinez works on a Valentine at the KidWorks’ after-school program in Santa Ana.



Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer

**IKER REYES** and Paola Vazquez took part in the KidWorks’ after-school program in Santa Ana, making Valentine’s Day cards for seniors.

Valentine’s Day is a holiday meant for spreading love, and a partnership between KidWorks’ after-school programs in Santa Ana and Meals on Wheels Orange County is making sure local senior citizens get a little extra love this Feb. 14.

Youth at KidWorks are making Valentines for distribution at this year’s themed lunch served at the Southwest Senior Center in Santa Ana. More than 100 older adults are expected to turn out for the Valentine’s Day lunch that will include live music and dancing in addition to the food provided by Meals on Wheels Orange County.

“Most people know us as an organization delivering meals to home-bound seniors, which we do, but we also provide so much more than a meal,” said Darla Olson, the group’s chief development officer.

Meal on Wheels O.C.’s mission is to “nourish the wellness, purpose and dignity of older adults and their families.” The organization serves at-risk older adults through home-delivered meals, lunch cafés and other services, like case management, adult day services and friendly visitors who spend time with older adults looking for companionship.

“Socialization is so important to their health,” said Olson. “Isolation is as detrimental to one’s health as smoking 15 cigarettes. So

just having that interaction and having people come in and visit with them is improving their health.”

Meals on Wheels’ lunch café program is offered in several Orange County cities. Open to adults over the age of 60, lunch is served at local senior centers for a voluntary contribution of \$3 and a fee of \$5 for any guest under the age of 60. The lunch café provides an opportunity for those able to get out and socialize.

“We have our lunch café program in 21 cities at 24 senior centers, and we are serving anywhere between 500 and 900 older adults in the lunch cafés each day,” said Olson.

Creating a chance for intergenerational connections is important for the seniors but also a valuable opportunity for youths.

While KidWorks offers support for college and career readiness, it also invests in the personal devel-

opment of students.

“Our leadership program is really ensuring that our youth are not just being developed in the academics sense, but that they are also being well-rounded as responsible citizens of their community, and this project goes hand in hand with that,” said Maria Ruvalcaba, leadership development coordinator at KidWorks.

The nonprofit was founded in 1993 as a way to serve children, youths and families living in under-resourced neighborhoods in central Santa Ana. KidWorks makes what the organization calls an “18-year commitment” to the kids in its program ensuring success not only getting into college or starting a career but succeeding at it. Holistic after-school programs for K-12 students are part of that, and working with groups like Meals on Wheels Orange County

gives the students opportunities for unique engagement.

On Feb. 11 at KidWorks Santa Ana: Dan Donahue Center, kids ages 5 to 13 worked diligently to make their special Valentines.

“We have a leadership lesson that our students do every Tuesday and today they are actually doing a lesson around service to others,” said Ruvalcaba.

Like many of the Meals on Wheels participants, quite a few of the students at KidWorks are bilingual, and the kids were encouraged to write their Valentines in both English and Spanish.

Fifth-grader Iker Reyes used Google Translate to help him refine his letter, sharing that he hopes it brings joy to whoever receives it.

“I might cheer up someone, which will help them mentally and physically, knowing that someone is always there to comfort them,” said Reyes.

Paola Vazquez worked beside him.

“I feel good doing this because I know their mood is going to brighten up when they get this,” said Vazquez.

Talented artist Elle Figueroa carefully sketched out a cartoon on her card.

“I want to make it special for them,” said Figueroa.

While the younger grades made the cards, high school students from KidWorks will deliver them to the senior center on Feb. 14.

Olson said she knows it will bring a lot of joy to the older adults attending.

“We are really grateful to be partnering with KidWorks,” said Olson. “It goes both ways because the kids feel like they are doing something special and the seniors are getting something special too.”

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## RACE

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see elected office as a logical next step.”

For Briceño, having a former Latina labor leader like Durazo in the state Senate served as an example and an inspiration.

“It is important to see her there, to understand that she’s legislating on behalf of working families,” Briceño said. “Absolutely, it was part of what influenced me to run.”

The race has yet to shape up outside of Artesia Mayor Ali Taj, a fellow Democrat, set to run for the seat. He has gained the endorsement of Quirk-Silva, the incumbent, and is making his own appeal to working families.

As an immigrant from Pakistan who worked for \$4.35 an hour as a salesperson at the Good Guys electronic store in Artesia, affordable housing is the key issue he wants to bring to Sacramento.

“For me, it’s personal,”

Taj said. “My son, who lives in Fullerton, can’t buy a house with his wife. They have a daughter and can just meet their rent. It’s important for the younger generation, who is coming out of college, working their jobs, sometimes two jobs, and are barely able to make ends meet and buy expensive eggs, which there’s a shortage of.”

Taj also touts his past experience as a chair of the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts who helped to negotiate labor

agreements for union workers.

With her own campaign underway, Briceño’s platform includes a pledge to champion affordable housing as a key issue, alongside education, boosting apprenticeship programs and economic justice.

“We need to make sure that people live where they work,” she said. “These are issues I have long advocated for.”

Briceño has participated in about half a dozen civil

disobedience arrest actions as part of that advocacy.

Her campaign for the Assembly seat has rolled out with a lengthy list of endorsers, including Rep. Derek Tran.

She had already decided to step down as party chair before committing to run. But, should Briceño win the election, the labor leader said she would leave her post as a co-president of Unite Here Local 11, where she’s been a fixture in leadership positions for the past quarter-century.

It’s a sacrifice Briceño is prepared to make, given the current political climate.

“Whether you like Trump or not, he has offered a bold vision for the country,” she said. “We have to counter that. My leadership has always been very bold. My union has built a movement. I’m going to show the district that I will work just as hard for them as I have for my members.”

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## MARKET

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her twin boys, now 5 years old, and she quickly found it hard to make ends meet.

She said she is met with the smiling faces of volunteers at the Community Market, not questions about how someone as young as her could need assistance.

“Whoever brought this to life, kudos to them, because there’s less waste and people get to pick [the food they want],” Dalal said. “It literally feels like a grocery store. I use what I need and what is needed for my kids.

I know my son’s allergies. It’s not someone else’s burden, it’s me, I get to hand-pick it. Just this program in general, I hope to God it always has funding, because it does change lives.”

One day, she said she was able to pick up a birthday cake for her twins at Families Forward.

“It was like, one less expense you have to worry about for that month,” she said, adding that she’s living paycheck to paycheck but is hopeful she’ll work a 9-to-5 job again once her twins are in school full time.

Hirneise said Families Forward is looking for volunteers to help with the

Community Market. Previously, the nonprofit could get a food shift done with six volunteers, but it now takes double that.

“If you like providing a warm smile and talking to strangers, and you thought, ‘I can work at Trader Joe’s,’ come work here instead,” she said with a smile herself. “We’d love to have you.”

For more about the food pantry or volunteer opportunities, visit [families-forward.org](http://families-forward.org) or call (949) 552-2727.

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## FLEET

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five years had an estimated price tag of \$6.34 million.

The 15-year implementation plan for the full transition of the municipal fleet includes as many as 31 vehicles to be replaced and as few as one in a given year up until 2039, based on their scheduled retirement.

Mayor Alex Rounaghi considered the possibility of pushing back replacing the trolleys as a cost-saving measure.

“I really like the idea of

moving forward with this in a way where we’re actually going to be able to say to the community, ‘Look, we’re saving money over the next five years by doing this,’” Rounaghi said. “I think that’s important, and with the trolleys and technology, it just seems like why would you put such a big investment when maybe you can lease it and mitigate your risk.”

Michael Litschi, the city’s director of transit and community services, said the trolleys are subject to the Innovative Clean Transit Regulation. The city will be among the

smaller transit agencies that must begin purchasing zero-emission replacement vehicles in 2026. All new purchases will have to be zero-emission vehicles by 2029, and the entire fleet must fall under that criteria by 2040.

“We have a fleet of 25 trolleys,” Litschi said. “Four of those are already past their useful life, and we normally would have already gone out to replace them, but we’ve been kind of holding off to see the results of this plan.”

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# Daily Pilot

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## SCREENINGS

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Southland Integrated Services, the Cambodian Family and the Vital Access Care Foundation, which is also known as the Vietnamese American Cancer Foundation.

Together, the partnership aims to train patient navigators to educate the Asian American community, through all its diversity, about cancer prevention.

“This doesn’t happen through one agency or just through CEOs,” Ahn added. “It’s really a partnership with systems.”

Asian Americans are the only racial group where cancer, not heart disease, is the leading cause of death.

While Asian Americans have lower overall cancer rates compared to other ethnic groups, studies show that they are also less likely to get screened.

Screenings are vital for breast, cervical, colorectal and lung cancer, which are easily identifiable and curable, if found in time.

Dr. Richard Pitts, CalOptima’s chief medical officer, stressed the importance of screenings as he donned a pink lab coat for the celebration.

Pitts keeps the coat on as a reminder to all that even



Courtesy OCAPICA

**SOUTHLAND INTEGRATED** Services CEO Tricia Nguyen speaks at the O.C. Asian American Cancer Partnership kickoff event in Garden Grove.

as Breast Cancer Awareness Month ends in October, breast cancer, itself, does not.

“We have to change the narrative so we’re all on the same page,” he said. “We understand that a little bit of fear is fine, but you have to channel it into action. Everybody here should ask five people they know if they’re up to date on their cancer screenings.”

In 2022, CalOptima announced a five-year, \$50.1 million Comprehensive Cancer Screening and Support Program.

Ahn helped organize a

successful bid for a grant, which forged the O.C. Asian American Cancer Partnership with CalOptima.

“Having a program like this that can navigate people to screen, we can get screened earlier,” said Mary Anne Foo, executive director of OCAPICA. “We can find cancers earlier. Having a program that talks about cancer prevention and treatment ... is so vital to Asian Americans. We’re just thrilled to be a part of this program.”

Dr. Regina Chinsio-Kwong, an Orange County Health Care Agency health officer, reinforced the need

to more openly discuss cancer prevention in the community.

Chinsio-Kwong, a cancer survivor herself, noted that lung cancer is on the rise for Asian American women under 50 who aren’t smokers with the reason why not yet known.

“We need to pay attention to our bodies, talk to our friends, talk to our community, spread the word, so that we can save more lives,” she said. “If you do get that diagnosis, tell your friends, tell your family [and] they will be there to support you.”

Other cancer survivors spoke at the event in an effort to further shrug off any stigma.

Dr. Thuy Ahn Nguyen, chief medical officer for Southland Integrated Services, shared her own experiences.

In 2020, an ultrasound text and biopsy led to a stage two breast cancer diagnosis, which was an early enough detection to successfully treat it.

“I am very grateful that I survived,” Nguyen said. “It taught me to cherish every moment, to appreciate little things and never take life for granted.”

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## Ralph Angel Avilez

March 5, 1938 - January 25, 2025

Born in East L.A. to Ralph M. & Lupe Calderon-Avilez, Ralph a retired CalTrans Engineer died in Fresno, CA at 86 years old. A proud Marine, husband, father, and Papa, he leaves behind children Matthew, Louise, Richard & Kathy, grandson Malachi and sister June Avilez. Services will be held on February 20th & 21st in Fresno by Whitehurst Funeral Home. Zoom of services available. Obituary and info: [www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/fresno-ca/ralph-avilez-12223683](http://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/fresno-ca/ralph-avilez-12223683)

# Remembering Johnny Cash's visit to Folsom

Two exhibits at the Fullerton Museum explore the works of artists affected by the prison system.

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

In 1968, Johnny Cash famously performed at one of the nation's first maximum-security prisons, playing music for the incarcerated individuals and recording one of his most successful live albums, "Johnny Cash at Folsom Prison." The country singer/songwriter also known as "the Man in Black" often got requests from inmates themselves asking him to come play at their prison on account of his 1955 hit song "Folsom Prison Blues."

The landmark event is celebrated in "1968: A Folsom Redemption" on view at the Fullerton Museum Center now through March 9. The photography exhibition features the work of freelance journalists, photographer Dan Poush and writer Gene Beley, who accompanied Cash to the January 1968 album recording. Images in the show also highlight a March 1, 1969, concert Cash and June Carter Cash played in Anaheim.

"Daniel Poush and Gene Beley, were invited to follow Johnny Cash through his Folsom prison tour, so they were firsthand witnesses to how the process works," said Georgette Collard, museum curator at Fullerton Museum Center. "Some of the songs were actually recorded on Gene's voice recorder, and that's how they were able to get the audio for the live album."

Beley flew down from Northern California for the exhibition's opening on Jan. 25, a lively reception that included a Johnny Cash cover band.

"We are really grateful that Gene was able to join us. He shed a lot of great



Bryan Crowe | Fullerton Museum Center

AN EXHIBIT titled "1968: A Folsom Redemption" opened at the Fullerton Museum Center on Jan. 25.

light on the show," said Elvia Susana Rubalcava, museum director at Fullerton Museum Center.

Dedicated to late Fullerton Museum Center board member Cheryl Richard, the exhibit features ephemera and 32 powerful photographs by Poush and Beley that give viewers an intimate look at the journey Cash and Carter Cash made by bus to Folsom and their performances. The couple was joined by Cash's father, Ray Cash and Reverend Floyd Gressett, who ministered to inmates and helped facilitate the performance. There are also images of Cash interacting with inmates, as members of the audience and also more directly, like the photos of Cash with Glen Sherley, the prisoner who wrote "Greystone Chapel."

"Johnny Cash performed 'Greystone Chapel' live at Folsom for him and he

continued to play the song and paid Glen royalties while he was still incarcerated," said Collard. "After Glen was released he played with Johnny Cash, and for years he toured with him."

As Collard was doing research for the exhibit, she considered the impact the historic performance has had on those in the prison system.

"At the time and even now, people don't have much empathy towards people that are incarcerated, so it was a really a big deal for Johnny Cash to go into their space," said Collard. "He wanted to humanize the incarcerated. It meant a lot to the prisoners."

In conjunction with "1968: A Folsom Redemption," Fullerton Museum Center is also showcasing "Beyond Confinement: The Untold Stories," an exhibit

that features the work of individual artists affected by the prison system, like Alberto Lule, Fulton Washington, Khadijah Silva and Nicholas Tirado.

"The idea behind the title is these artists were once incarceration or had close family that have been impacted by the incarceration system and they saw how that effected them," said Collard. "Now that they are out, these are their success stories."

Fulton Leroy Washington, also known as Mr. Wash, is a well-known artist convicted in 1997 for a nonviolent drug offense. In 2016, President Obama commuted his sentence, granting him clemency. Mr. Wash honed his craft while he was in prison, and his supremely detailed work is full of meaning and symbolism. A self-portrait titled "Deteriorating" depicts the texture of the gray hair in

his beard, while the cracks in his face, resembling continents, reveal entire worlds.

A piece called "Horse Walker" by Khadijah Silva illustrates the cycle of the "prison industrial complex" and the inability to make progress once an individual is caught up in it.

"Also, in some of the old prisons they used to have horse walkers to tie prisoners to them, and that would be their yard time," said Collard.

The reflectiveness of the ball and chains that hang from the slowly rotating horse walker allow the viewer to literally see themselves in the work.

"This piece is just so conceptual, there are so many meanings to it," said Collard.

The work of Alberto Lule follows his journey serving a 13-year sentence in California prisons and his

artistic and academic life afterwards, with ready-made and other works, like three panels created using forensic fingerprint dusting powder. The pieces are inspired by a childhood moment when police used the fact that his parents were in the U.S. illegally to intimidate him into allowing them to search his home without a warrant.

"He remembers distinctly how this powder stuck on everything, they powdered the whole house, and it was so difficult to get rid of," said Collard.

The exhibit ends with information about local reentry programs, like UCI Lifted, where Lule now teaches, and Cal State Fullerton's Project Rebound, the Rising Scholars Program at Fullerton College and Inside Out Writers, where Rubalcava taught years ago.

"They work with that 18-to-21-year-old bracket, working with them before they can go into the adult prison system," said Rubalcava. "That was a tremendous experience."

In honor of the two exhibits, Fullerton Museum Center will host February Blues, a live country and blues concert series each Thursday of the month from 6 to 8:30 p.m. An "Artist in Focus" event will be held on the exhibits' closing day, March 9, from 1 to 3 p.m., with artists from "Beyond Confinement" discussing their work and sharing their stories.

Collard hopes those who visit the museum will leave feeling inspired by Cash's example.

"Johnny Cash went in and brought media attention, worldwide attention to these people that were incarcerated," said Collard. "He treated everyone like a human."

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COLUMN | **PATRICE APODACA**

# Orange County enlists top talent as it forms a Climate Action Plan

After taking office as an Orange County Supervisor in 2021, Katrina Foley noticed something amiss. Cups and other products made from polystyrene foam were still being used at county facilities.

Commonly known as Styrofoam, this material is notorious for breaking into carcinogenic microplastics that are non-biodegradable and nonrecyclable, and



which can travel vast distances, polluting land and sea alike.

But Foley also saw the bigger problem at work. The county lacked a framework for measuring greenhouse gas emissions and adopting programs and practices for reducing the emissions at all its facilities and operations — what's known as a Climate Action Plan.

Such plans have been adopted by governments large and small, from individual municipalities to California's ambitious statewide initiative that has made it a leader in environmental policy with a goal of achieving net zero carbon pollution by 2045. Though the targets set by these



A SMALL PILE of trash is left behind after Newport Beach cleaned up debris near the Santa Ana River in January 2023.

File Photo

plans will require considerable effort, strides are being made toward not only reducing the carbon footprints of public operations but improving efficiency.

Orange County needed to get on board, Foley realized. The foam cups were "the first sign to me that we

didn't have a plan."

So she got to work. Now, four years later, the Orange County Climate Action Plan is nearing the last major step toward becoming reality. If all goes well, it will receive final approval by the end of the year.

While that would be very

welcome news, as it would set Orange County on a more environmentally responsible and cost-effective path, significant hurdles and possibly outright roadblocks could be encountered. More on that later.

So far, at least, progress is

being made.

Foley, now vice chair of the Board of Supervisors, realized early on that a point person was needed. That person was found in Tara Tisopulos, who has been on the job for about a year as the Deputy Director of Environmental Sustain-

ability at OC Waste & Recycling.

Tisopulos has worked in environmental management for more than 30 years. Now she is tasked with overseeing Orange County's sustainability efforts and collaborating with all 22 county departments and the County Executive Office to develop and implement the climate plan. She also coordinates with individual cities, and even other counties, to identify areas of cooperation.

Her first order of business was to inventory county operations — including landfills, the airport, harbors, the Sheriff's Department and county-owned fleets of vehicles — to find out where to target resources.

"We needed to know the starting point," she said. "We wanted to see what our own footprint looked like."

That inventory was completed last summer. What she found was that the overwhelming share of county-produced greenhouse gases — 87% — came from its three active landfills. Inactive landfill sites, about 20 in all, are also still emitting the climate-warming gasses. So

See **Apodaca**, page A8

**A WORD, PLEASE**  
**JUNE CASAGRANDE**

## I's instinct is you know this is wrong

With all the working from home, cultural divisiveness, addiction to screens and the rise of AI "companions," humans are becoming ever more isolated. That's a bad thing. But there's an upside. As we go through life desperately alone and starved for human contact, at least we're less likely to make shared possessive errors like this one from a travel post on Reddit: "I bought my boyfriend and I's tickets at the same time."



say, "That's I's car" or "I should get started filing I's taxes" or "Do these pants make I's backside look big"? No one.

We all know "I" isn't used as a possessive. It's a subject: I have a car. I filed my taxes. I am wearing unflattering pants.

So how do these errors happen? How can we get so confused about a pronoun we all know so well? Human contact. The other person. In the case of that Reddit poster, her boyfriend was the culprit. Had the poor woman flown to Hawaii alone, sure, she would have missed out on a marriage proposal, but at least she would have had the sense to say, "I bought my ticket."

This error is related to the much more common "with John and I" mistake

See **Word**, page A7

**MAILBAG**



**THE COMMUNITY** and Library Services Commission approved a controversial Huntington Beach Central Library 50th anniversary plaque on Tuesday night.

Courtesy of city of Huntington Beach

## Nothing 'alluring' about proposed library plaque

Re: Huntington Beach commission approves 'MAGA' plaque for Central Library 50th anniversary, Daily Pilot, Feb. 12: It is apparent from the wording on the Community and Library Services Commission's proposed plaque marking the 50th anniversary of the Huntington Beach Library that the intent is to commemorate the current City Council and its members' ideology rather than to pay tribute to the library. Considering the current council's intent to censor the materials available there, I find it ironic that the wording includes "... and free to grow." Perhaps, it should read ... "and free to grow as long as it is within the constraints of our ideology."

Furthermore, I find it obscene that the use of taxpayer money is to be used to monumentalize the MAGA acronym in a thinly veiled tribute to the library. The support system for the library needs to be nonpartisan, allowing the library to truly function in an independent and free manner. I strongly request the message on the plaque be

reworded to focus on the attributes of the library and not the self-aggrandizing City Council.

**Bryan Ballard**  
Huntington Beach

I have been attending and speaking at public meetings in Huntington Beach for the better part of 25 years, and yet, the Community and Library Services Commission meeting on Feb. 11 took the cake for the most abject and pusillanimous display of civic cowardice I have ever seen on the part of all the commission members in dealing with a pet MAGA project on the agenda. It was a proposed bronze plaque celebrating the 50th anniversary of the modern central library facility completed in 1975. Instead of focusing on the merits honoring the officials who helped build the library in conformance with other milestones, including the dedication one, the plaque design for the 50th anniversary was vulgarly partisan and spelled out in acrostic fashion in the center of the plaque an acronym spelling MAGA.

A sizable crowd at-

tended the meeting with about 40 residents speaking in public comments. Fully 80% of the speakers opposed the project in no uncertain terms. In addition, over 330 communications were sent in on the agenda item, probably with the same proportion of opposition to support.

Although all of the commissioners were appointed by the new 7-0 conservative City Council, the opposing speakers were on-point and passionate. They included library staff, volunteers, patrons, and residents who simply thought politicizing their crown jewel civic institution in this manner was wrong. Especially since all of the City Council members and commissioners named on the plaque had been uniformly critical of the library and its role in serving the community and had callously supported privatizing its operational management.

While it was widely expected that the commission might rubber stamp the project, it was nevertheless jolting to see such overwhelming opposition ignored. All of the commissioners went into duck

and cover mode, with the only criticism of the design and content being that it was "busy."

Now this project goes to the City Council where it will undoubtedly be "bronze stamped."

It was sad to see democracy disgraced in such a whimpering manner. It will be sadder when the public realizes that it will be suffering this highly visible "plaque psoriasis" for quite some time.

**Tim Geddes**  
Huntington Beach

Attention Huntington Beach City Council: Your mismanagement is out of control! You orchestrated a reckless airshow deal that squandered taxpayer dollars, forcing the city taxpayers to cover police, fire services and an environmental impact report — costs that should have been the vendor's responsibility. This was a million-dollar giveaway, a blatant misuse of public funds.

And make no mistake — this issue is not going away. A full investigation is coming at both the civil and state levels. The courts

See **Mailbag**, page A8

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# Resort marks a month of Black music and culture

BY SARAH MOSQUEDA

When community gospel choir KJLH Radio Free Voices took the stage at Fantasyland Theatre at Disneyland Park on Feb. 8, the group hardly needed a microphone. Under the directorship of Tyanta Snow, the group's powerful voices rang out through the park.

"It's going to get better after this," Snow said to a cheering crowd, referencing the lyrics of the song.

The inspiring gospel performance is part of "Celebrate Gospel" and one of the ways Disneyland Resort is amplifying Black voices during the month of February in honor of Black History Month.

"Celebrate Gospel" is one of the featured events of a larger program known as "Celebrate Soulfully," said singer/songwriter Dedrick Bonner. "We are inviting everyone to experience a wide range of unique music, food and arts and crafts, all of which pay tribute to Black heritage and culture."

Bonner served as emcee for the special show that included a performance from his own gospel choir, Singers of Soul, headlined by award-winning gospel group DOE.

"Celebrate Soulfully" began as a yearly event at Walt Disney World in Florida and in 2022, the event came to Anaheim for the first time where it has also become a celebrated tradition that creates a culture of inclusion.

"Celebrate Soulfully" is such a treasured event that really brings us closer as a community and helps us foster understanding and being together as one," said Disney ambassador Raul Aquino



Sarah Mosqueda

**VOCALIST DIME** and her accompanying jazz quintet perform hits of the 1920s and '30s at Disney California Adventure Park. Disneyland Resort celebrates Black voices in February Black History Month.

Rojas.

A second "Celebrate Gospel" show is planned for Feb. 15 with the Grammy-nominated Melvin Crispell III headlining.

Other live musical performances are scheduled throughout the resort for the month, including nightly music at the Downtown Disney LIVE! Stage featuring Motown, rock, jazz and reggae.

At Disneyland Hotel, "Celebrate Soulfully" artists will perform on select days in the Broken Spell Lounge and a cappella group Sequim Dream will perform in the lobby on Fridays and Saturdays. Throughout the year

on Buena Vista Street at Disney California Adventure Park, jazz group Five & Dime arrive by vintage vehicle to the outdoor stage to play hits of the 1920s and '30s.

In addition to the musical performances, special crafts are being offered this month near the Fantasyland Theatre, like stained-glass window coloring sheets, evocative of the churches where gospel music is sung, and the Giving Flowers Wall, where guests can write down what they are grateful for on a flower to add to the wall.

"In the African American com-

munity we always say we like to give people their flowers," said Bonner. "They say, 'Give me my flowers while I yet live.' Giving flowers is a celebration of an individual's work and acknowledgment and historically speaking, specific flowers were used as special signals to indicate a safe passage to freedom."

There are also limited-time menu offerings like a fried chicken bowl at Disneyland's Troubadour Tavern, filled with fried chicken, baked macaroni and cheese, collard greens and sweet potato cornbread and black-eyed pea stew with hot

water cornbread from Award Wieners at Disney California Adventure.

At Downtown Disney's recently opened Parkside Market, Sip & Sonder is pouring a special cold brew coffee made with chicory and cane sugar called "Nod to Nicaud," honoring a slave turned entrepreneur.

"Born enslaved, Rose Nicaud became one of the first women of color vendors in the city of New Orleans, and her tenacity and success enabled her to purchase her and her husband's freedom, ultimately establishing a thriving coffee business in the world-renowned French Market," Sip & Sonder co-founders, Amanda-Jane Thomas and Shanita Nicholas, shared in a statement. "As Black women business owners, we know firsthand the challenges that come with this path and we proudly carry Rose's legacy forward, knowing that every cup we serve is an opportunity to honor our roots and inspire future generations."

"Celebrate Soulfully" continues throughout February, with some musical performances returning in June for Black Music Month. Bonner touched on the power music has to tell a story and the impact a gospel choir can make when its members raise their voices together.

"As music historian Alan Lomax once said, as we live so do we sing. That is the power of gospel music, etched in each lyric and woven in each harmony is the fabric of our story," said Bonner. "In our story, the word gospel means 'good news.'"

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## WORD

Continued from page A6

that, frankly, almost everyone makes. "With" is a preposition, prepositions take objects and "me," not "I," is the object form that belongs here: "with John and me." But "I's" takes this to a whole new level.

It's a safe bet that people who misuse "I" labor under the false belief that "me" is incorrect or at least

improper when paired with another person. A kid who says, "Billy and me are going to the park" gets corrected pretty swiftly: "It's 'Billy and I,' not 'me,'" adults tell them. The kid walks away with the lesson that, if he wants to get to the park with the least hassle possible, he should just always use "I."

On top of all that, we're not taught how to handle shared possessives. Is it "My boyfriend's and my" or

"my boyfriend and my"? I've studied this stuff for years and even I am not comfortable with this.

I know the rules for shared possessives: "Ed's and Louise's cars" is correct if they own the cars individually. If they own the cars jointly, it's "Ed and Louise's cars." That's because the rule says that if possession is shared, Ed and Louise share an apostrophe and S, too. But when people possess

things separately, each gets their own apostrophe and S.

That's an easy rule when you're working with nouns like Ed, but when you're working with pronouns like "my," things get weird. "Ed's and my cars" is easy enough if Ed and I own our cars separately, but if we share cars, a strict reading of the rule requires us to say, "Ed and my cars." The absence of an apostrophe and s after Ed's name

strikes me as unnatural. And I don't hear other people saying "Ed and my ..." No matter who owns what, they say "Ed's and my."

Other pronouns pose the same difficulty: If you want to talk about the jointly owned "Ed and Louise's cars" but you're using a pronoun for Louisa, you'd get "Ed and her car," which is unclear and sounds wrong.

In these cases, I openly

defy the rule about sharing possession. I say "Ed's and her cars" no matter whether they own the cars together or separately. As long as I'm not using "I's," it's unlikely anyone will even know if I'm wrong.

**JUNE CASAGRANDE** is the author of "The Joy of Syntax: A Simple Guide to All the Grammar You Know You Should Know." She can be reached at [JuneTCN@aol.com](mailto:JuneTCN@aol.com).

## THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

By Stella Zawistowski

### ACROSS

- 1 Bird that honks
- 6 "Fernando" band
- 10 Big shade trees
- 14 In tune: 2 wds.
- 15 \_ as a cucumber
- 16 Wrench or saw
- 17 Loud nocturnal bird: 2 wds.
- 19 Edge of a roof
- 20 Info from the grapevine
- 21 Highly educated
- 23 Cry loudly
- 24 \_ and yang
- 25 Ewe's mate
- 28 Paths for wheelchairs
- 32 Soprano Callas
- 36 Pitcher's stat: Abbr.
- 37 Pioneering 1940s computer
- 38 Microscope part
- 39 Foldable bed
- 40 Watering holes
- 43 Promotional spots
- 44 Pre-owned
- 46 "Candle in the Wind" singer John
- 47 Perish
- 48 Repair a seam
- 50 \_ the Riveter
- 51 Posed for a portrait
- 52 Feeling blue
- 54 "Ready, \_ go!"
- 56 Law school grad's test: 2 wds.
- 60 Studied carefully
- 64 At a distance
- 65 Storage spot
- 67 Courage
- 68 Casual shirts
- 69 "Honest!": 2 wds.
- 70 Boys in a family
- 71 "Right away," in an ER
- 72 Avarice

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14						15					16			
17					18						19			
20								21		22				
				23					24					
25	26	27		28		29	30	31		32		33	34	35
36					37						38			
39				40					41	42		43		
44			45			46						47		
48				49		50						51		
				52		53			54		55			
56	57	58				59			60			61	62	63
64					65		66							
67					68						69			
70					71						72			

## SUDOKU

By the Mephram Group

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit [sudoku.org.uk](http://sudoku.org.uk).

					1		2	
				2	5			6
	5	7		6		9		
4			6					8
8	9						6	5
7				8				9
		6		8		7	9	
3			4	5				
	8		1					

For answers to the crossword and Sudoku puzzles, see page A8.

### DOWN

- 1 "Oh my!"
- 2 A single time
- 3 Gumbo veggie
- 4 Crystal ball readers
- 5 Ugly buildings
- 6 Feeling sore
- 7 Angry fan's shout
- 8 Cereal holder
- 9 Narrow city street
- 10 Everlasting
- 11 Mortgage, e.g.
- 12 Relocate
- 13 Snowy-day toy
- 18 Poolside hut
- 22 Intend
- 25 Happen again
- 26 Stood up
- 27 Spouses

- 29 Middle-distance runner
- 30 Bancho of the NBA
- 31 Edinburgh natives
- 33 Interpretations
- 34 New Delhi's country
- 35 Good thing to have
- 41 Booms and whistles
- 42 Showing scorn
- 45 Abandons
- 49 Makeup of a candle
- 53 Pub game
- 55 Private teacher
- 56 Grocery sacks
- 57 Natural Black hairstyle
- 58 Springtime precipitation
- 59 Encounter
- 60 The Washington \_
- 61 Shoe bottom
- 62 Shallowest Great Lake
- 63 Added color to
- 66 Fried rice morsel

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**WAR**

*Continued from page A1*

“Your job was to take care of your buddy, and your buddy was there to take care of you. And the friendship, the bond you made with these guys — we were incredibly close.”

The kinship and camaraderie fostered on foreign shores, debilitating losses experienced during a war whose motives were scrutinized then and are still questioned today and the lackluster reception troops faced upon their return home are all subjects explored in a new exhibit that opened Saturday at the O.C. fairgrounds Heroes Hall veterans museum.

“Echoes of Conflict: Remembering Vietnam” takes a comprehensive look at the controversial war, a story told through artifacts, immersive experiences and the voices of the men and women who, like Todd, survived its turmoil, triumphs and tragedies.

Running through Dec. 21, the exhibit includes a speaker series that on March 1 will feature Black Marines from the Montford Point Marines Assn., reflecting on the topics of war, service and sacrifice.

A second installment planned for March 29 will examine the lives and service of women who worked on the front lines as combat nurses, with a talk from 4th District Court of Appeals’ Associate Justice Eileen C. Moore, a Vietnam veteran.

Heroes Hall supervisor Johanna Svensson said “Echoes of Conflict” coincides with the 50-year commemoration of the fall of Saigon on April 30, 1975, which marked the end of the war in Vietnam.

“We wanted something that didn’t glorify it or put it down but sort of communicated that Vietnam was a very divisive war, both in-country and at home,” Svensson said Thursday.

The exhibit educates



*Photos by Don Leach | Staff Photographer*

**A DETAILED SCENE** of bunker life on display at the “Echoes of Conflict: Remembering Vietnam,” at the Heroes Hall Museum in Costa Mesa.



**LIFE MAGAZINES** with Vietnam War scenes on their covers on display in “Echoes of Conflict: Remembering Vietnam” at Heroes Hall.

visitors on the international events that led up to the war, taking them through the draft and enlistment of millions of Americans, many of them still teenagers, their wartime experiences and returns home.

“Echoes of Conflict” covers the difficult aftermath of service members who were prisoners of war, who faced the fallout of post-traumatic stress disorder or medical complications caused by the massive spraying of the herbicide Agent Orange to root out enemy forces from their vegetative covers and destroy crops on which they relied for food.

“There are so many movies about it, so there is a collective consciousness about what it was, but I feel like so many people don’t know what Vietnam veterans had to experience, which was completely different from World War II and Korea,” Svensson said.

Part of piecing that story together involved the collection of artifacts provided by veterans,

many of whom volunteer at Heroes Hall as docents.

Todd said Thursday he happily contributed his P38 can opener, used to open packages of C-rations, along with a rubber map and a “blood chit” — a fabric document translated into 14 languages for use in the event of one’s capture — gifted him by a pilot in Vietnam.

These days, Todd looks back on his service with some amazement.

“It was mainly fought by people who were kids, just 18 or 19. They were just out of high school and had no experience whatsoever with anything,” he said. “But 90% of them rose to the occasion and did what they were supposed to do, and some did more. They had a job, and they did it and did it well.”

Heroes Hall, 88 Fair Drive, in Costa Mesa, is open Wednesday through Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is free. Visit [ochoeroeshall.org](http://ochoeroeshall.org) or call (714) 708-1613.

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**APODACA**

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those landfills must be a chief area addressed by the plan.

Tisopulos was pleased to learn that the county was already “way ahead of the game on landfill technology.” But there’s much more to be done, she said, such as developing a plan to convert emissions into usable energy.

There are many other areas of concern that Tisopulos has identified, including coastal erosion, sea level rise, extreme weather events, and wildfire prevention and response. One of her top priorities is environmental justice, which is aimed at helping poor and marginalized communities that are often subjected to greater risk because of their proximity to freeways, pollution-spewing plants and other environmental hazards.

Accountability is also baked into the plan, with annual progress reports and a full accounting every five years, after which priorities and methods might

be shuffled based on needs and results.

Now the bad news, or at least extremely worrisome. It will come as no surprise that every action item addressed in the plan will depend on one crucial factor: money.

Although, as mentioned, the plan will outline ways for the county to operate more efficiently, sustainably and healthfully — saving us money in the long run — it will require initial investments. Foley and Tisopulos have been focusing on securing funding largely through state and federal grants.

It’s the federal part that is now in danger because of the Trump Administration’s desire to cut off such outlays and its stated denial of climate change. On the days that I interviewed Foley and Tisopulos, they were trying to figure out how the attempt to freeze all federal grants and loans — and the whipsaw environment created by conflicting statements from the administration and legal challenges to its policies — would play out.

“I think it’s very short-sighted,” said Foley, referring to the potential loss of federal funding. She also noted that California contributes far more to federal coffers than it gets back, a point that is often sidelined when the state is in need of assistance.

“Hopefully we don’t have an extreme weather event in the next few years that wipes out coastal rail.”

Nonetheless, both Foley and Tisopulos expressed confidence that Orange County will move forward with its plan.

“We will be fine,” said Foley. “We will carry on.”

I take some comfort from their assurances and look forward to reporting on specific aspects of the plan in action. For now, every Orange County resident should get behind the plan and urge their elected representatives to do their part to secure the funding necessary to ensure the clean and healthy future we all desire.

**PATRICE APODACA** is a former Los Angeles Times staff writer and is coauthor of “A Boy Named Courage: A Surgeon’s Memoir of Apartheid.” She lives in Newport Beach.

**MAILBAG**

*Continued from page A6*

have the power to control your actions, while we, the taxpayers, are forced to foot the bill for your mistakes.

Enough with your national political grandstanding. Your job is to run this city, not posture for national attention. Fix the potholes. Stop meddling with our library and trampling on 1st Amendment rights. Your shameless attempt to invalidate petitions is yet another glaring example of your incompetence.

And let’s talk about your latest absurdity — this ridiculous plan to “light up” Central Park.

Huntington Beach is not the Riviera of the O.C., and no amount of artificial lighting will change that. What it will do is disrupt residents, especially those on Nimrod Street, drive away wildlife and damage park infrastructure, all in the name of yet another reckless money grab.

Stop wasting taxpayer dollars on frivolous lawsuits under the delusion that you’re the smartest people in the room. Spoiler alert: You’re not.



*Courtesy of Mariellen Bergman*

**YOUNG NEWS CONSUMER:** Reader Mariellen Bergman of Balboa Island wrote that she recently had to wrestle for the Daily Pilot with her visiting grandson, who has a taste for community coverage. The helmet, she wrote, is meant to help shape his head after he slept on his side.

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**Kathleen Bunge**  
Huntington Beach

**Parallels to WWII?**

Orange County’s focus on immigration dates back decades. Beginning in the early 1960s, when the John Birch Society was a political powerhouse, local elected officials railed against what they characterized then as an uncontrolled “migrant invasion.”

The issue became a national story when the OC Republican Party was forced to pay more than \$400,000 for illegally posting guards near selected Santa Ana polling booths in 1988, or when Proposition 187 was drafted to crack down on providing public services to undocumented immigrants in 1994.

Today, President Trump’s call to deport as many as 15 million immigrants in the country illegally coast to coast is being hailed as a victory by many people living here.

For those who oppose rounding up 1,500 people a day nationally, their recourse is to fight Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in court and/or establish sanctuary cities. Both of which, in my opinion,

ion, will force hundreds of thousands of men, women and children into hiding, just like in Europe leading up to, and during, WWII.

It was there, a young Jewish teenager and her family hid for two years in an attic in Amsterdam before the Nazis discovered them and shipped them to concentration camps. The young girl’s name was Anne. She did not survive the war, but the journal entries she kept while hiding eventually became known to the world as “The Diary of Anne Frank.” To date, it has been published in 70 languages and remains one of the most widely read books ever.

With this backdrop in mind, my question is this: Will another teenage girl, hiding somewhere in O.C. with her parents, become the next Anne Frank? I don’t know the answer, but my guess is a young teen named Maria, Antonia or Selena, for example, definitely could be. If this happens, then my hope is her new diary will help Orange County finally put its past immigration hysteria to rest. Now, wouldn’t that be something?

**Denny Freidenrich**  
Laguna Beach

**Porter for president**

Where is Katie Porter when you need her? After giving up her Congressional seat to run for the Senate, she went back to her teaching position at

**Lynn Lorenz**  
Newport Beach

**CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS**

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